

Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge

FY 2012 Accomplishment Report Highlights

Fiscal year 2012 has been a remarkable year for this unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Canaan Valley continues to provide sound stewardship of the resource entrusted to us by the American people. The Refuge staff; it's highly motivated citizen support group; and a dedicated cadre of volunteers, all work together to ensure that Canaan Valley's natural, cultural and social importance continue to grow and prosper, now and for generations to come.

The work accomplished by the Refuge this year could never be adequately captured in two pages and is contained in a more detailed report available at your request. Some of our accomplishments for the year include:

In Administration

America's Great Outdoors Initiative – Building A Resilient Canaan Valley Landscape

We were honored to be selected for this initiative and continue to build on successful partnerships for long term, landscape centric conservation in the Allegheny Highlands of West Virginia. AGO involves private industry, the educational community, NGO's and numerous Federal, State and local partnerships.

Realty

Acquisition of 326 Acres – This acquisition completes a multi-year, three parcel acquisition of critical habitat. Four other active realty files in progress.

Boundary work to consolidate transfer of Canaan Valley Institute lands to WV Department of Natural Resources.

Personnel

Significant changes in staffing this year include the transfer of Maintenance Worker John Nicely and the retirement of Park Ranger Jackie Burns. Dawn Washington replaces Ken Sturm as Supervisory Biologist and Deputy Refuge Manager Richard Zane is settling in after completing his first full year at Canaan. Term employees Feather, Koontz and Phillips continue to provide critical support. Training for staff included Congressional Affairs, Oil & Gas, Realty Academy, Refuge Academy, Heavy Equipment, Law Enforcement and Chainsaw. Breakfast retreats, staff days and regular staff meetings insure the lines of communication remain open.

Partnerships and the Community

The Refuge has longstanding relationships with our State Partners, Legislators, and community leaders. We regularly brief County Commissioners, State and Federal law makers, town Mayors and homeowners associations.

Budget and Acquisition

The Station suffered a loss of \$38,000 in management capability this year but was still able to provide adequate support to refuge operations. Relocation expenses for incoming Maintenance worker and replacement of Park Ranger position will be upcoming challenges. Staff deftly handled appropriated funds to achieve exemplary results through the transition to FBMS.

In Biology

Biology continues its implementation of our CCP completed in 2011 and continues to perform outstanding, science based resource management through partnerships and implementation of Service principles and standards.

- * First ever survey of mussels at Canaan Valley NWR in partnership with WVDNR and ORNWR (ARS)
- * On-going surveys for bats, vernal pool (frog/salamander), deer browse, breeding bird, flying squirrel, lepidoptera and woodcock (ARS)
- * Invasive Species control with innovative volunteer program
- * Continued support and partnership with WVDNR studying the effects of Chronic Wasting Disease (\$10,000)
- * Management activities for breeding birds and upland game species including alder stand management, mowing and haying operations
- * Highly successful reforestation efforts with NGO and educational institution support on multiple day plantings; 6000 Red Spruce, 5000 Alder planted
- * Fisheries studies and grant submission for new fish passage structure in partnership with Trout Unlimited.
- * On-going hydrology study of rail grade impacts on Valley hydrology

In Public Use

- * Successful 2nd biennial “Block Party” celebrates CVNWR Fouders, thirty partners and Friends celebrate with 450 community members (ARS)
- * Wrote successful \$480,000 Public Lands Highway Discretionary Funds grant. First for FWS West Virginia. Awarded \$289,000 WV State Transportation Grant
- * Highly successful hunt program issued 2600 permits. Managed hunts.
- * Innovative outreach programs: Evening lecture series, regularly led nature walks, family reading programs, historical displays and kiosk interpretation
- * Management of a heavily used trail system of 40 plus miles of trail. Two new bridges, several miles of renovated trail and a new trail brochure
- * Leading exhibitor in area celebrations including Forest Festival, Birding Festival, Leaf Peepers, Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs, Capitol Conservation Days

- * Outstanding programs for children: Wild School day, partnerships with area schools, YCC, SCA and regular classroom visits by area teachers and students
- * Dedicated volunteer cadre supports all refuge operations; ##### hours in FY 2012
- * Master Naturalist Program, Master Gardener Program
- * Heart of the Highlands 26 mile multiple agency working group participation
- * On-going boundary posting, LE coordination with State and Federal agencies and pro-active enforcement of Refuge rules and regulations
- * First Junior Duck Stamp contest hosted by CVNWR nets 135 entries from 16 counties throughout West Virginia. NCTC, ORINWR and WSS Hatchery assist.

Friends of the 500th

The Friends of the 500th continues to be a great asset to the Refuge and the resource we manage.

- * Membership is at an all time high of 253 members up from 216 last year
- * Bookstore operations generated \$6,345 in Refuge support dollars
- * Friends run a successful wildlife photography contest, publish a quarterly newsletter and assist with a variety of refuge programs.

